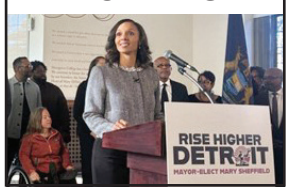
POLITICS



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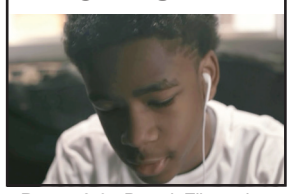
COMMUNITY



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Nearly $2 Million in New Grants and Major Growth Announced

at the 2025 National Association of Hispanic Publications Convention

By Kirk Whisler

The 2025 National Association of Hispanic Publications (NAHP) Convention delivered a powerful message: Latino media is growing, unified, and more influential than ever. Held November 12–14 at the University of San Diego, the convention unveiled nearly $2 million in new grants, strengthened cross-industry alliances, and set the stage for unprecedented opportunities for Hispanic publishers and media partners nationwide.

The NAHP has experienced extraordinary expansion, with membership surging 71% since 2022—now representing 771 print and digital outlets. This growth reflects the association's sharpened focus on empowering members as multiplatform Latino content creators, not just traditional publishers.

Collectively, NAHP members now reach 15.4 million Latinos every week—that's 32% of all Latino adults in the United States. For brands and agencies, this represents one of the largest, most trusted, and most culturally relevant media networks serving Latino communities.

At a time when some Latino media operations are only focusing on English-speaking Latinos, the NAHP focuses on reaching Latinos in the language they want, Spanish and/or English.

The 2025 convention underscored NAHP's deep commitment to cross-community coalition building. Today, NAHP collaborates closely with Black, Asian American, and Alternative media organizations nationwide, strengthening shared advocacy and expanding opportunities for partners who seek authentic multicultural reach.

This unity gives brands, agencies, and philanthropic partners a single, strategic entry point into diverse media sectors—grounded in community trust.

Speakers and allies included some of the most influential leaders shaping today's news and media ecosystem, including:

Gary Acosta, *Founder & CEO, NAHREP*
Natalia Gonzalez, *Program Officer, Knight Foundation*
Dr. John Warren, *Chair, National Newspaper Publishers Association*
Todd Stauffer, *Association of Alternative Newsweeklies*
Regina Brown Wilson, *CEO, California Black Media*
Julian Do, *American Community Media*
Matt Pearce, *Rebuild Local News*
Tina Wu, *News Media Alliance*
Mago Torres, *Google News Initiative*

EL CENTRAL Hispanic News won three Gold Awards at the NAHP annual conference in San Diego, CA last week. Pictured from left, Michael D. Gutierrez, digital content manager, EL CENTRAL, Kirk Whisler, founding president of the NAHP, Eva Garza Dewaelsche, owner and publisher of EL CENTRAL, Robert Dewaelsche, managing editor, EL CENTRAL and Alvaro Gurdián, publisher of La Noticia in Charlotte, NC and president of the NAHP. Photo by NAHP/ Paulo Sanchez Neira.

Their collective insights reinforced that Latino media is critical to the future of American journalism, community trust, and equitable representation.

Over the past two years, the NAHP Board has modernized its bylaws and operations to align with a digital-first publishing environment.

The newly elected Executive Board includes:

Alvaro Gurdián, *La Noticia* – President
Evelyn Castro, *La Prensa de Houston* – Vice President
Jesús del Toro, *La Raza* – Marketing Vice President
Hector Felix Jr., *El Informador del Valle* – Membership Vice President
Ricardo Hurtado, *El Sol Latino* – Sales Vice President
Silvana Diaz, *Noticia Long Island* – Secretary
José Zepeda Jr., *Aviso Community Media* – Treasurer

To better reflect the industry's evolution, NAHP also introduced newly elected Industry Sector Directors, representing key media formats:

Anthony Ibarria, *El Especial* – Weekly Newspaper Director
Jesús Sanchez, *El Comercio de Colorado* – Less-than-Weekly Newspaper Director
Ghisela Eljach, *InSouth Magazine* – Magazine Director
Bel Hernandez, *Latin Heat* – Podcast Director
Daniel Ajzen, *Hispanopolis* – Website Director

This expanded leadership ensures that every platform—from print to digital to audio—has a strong voice shaping NAHP's future.

In 2025, NAHP strengthened and expanded collaborations with leading institutions and brands, including: Knight Foundation, Google News Initiative, T-Mobile, Wells Fargo, Diageo, Verizon Small Business Digital Ready, California Black Media, and Scouting America.

These partnerships reflect a growing recognition of the essential role Latino media outlets play in civic engagement, economic empowerment, and culturally relevant communication.

Kirk Whisler is the founding president of the NAHP and president of the Latino 247 Media Group. He can be reached at kirk@whisler.com.

Celebrating Excellence: The José Martí Awards

This year's José Martí Awards saw an 18% increase in submissions, with especially strong growth in digital categories—showing the innovation and evolution happening across Latino media.

Highlights include:

Latina Publisher of the Year: Hilda Gurdián, *CEO, La Noticia* (North Carolina)
Latino Publisher of the Year: Hector Felix Sr., Publisher, *El Informador del Valle*

Their leadership reflects the talent, resilience, and creativity driving Latino journalism forward.

The 2025 NAHP Convention made one thing clear: This is the moment to invest in and partner with Latino media.

For Hispanic publishers, joining NAHP means gaining access to national partnerships and grant opportunities, training, advocacy, and digital transformation support and a unified network that strengthens your voice and reach

For agencies and brands, NAHP offers direct access to trusted, locally grounded Latino outlets. scalable national reach with cultural authenticity, partnerships built on transparency, accountability, and community impact.

The future of Latino media is bright—and NAHP is leading the way. For more information on membership, partnerships, or programs, visit nahp.org.

2025 José Martí Awards for EL CENTRAL Hispanic News

EL CENTRAL Hispanic News held up its proud tradition as the most award-winning bilingual Hispanic publication in Michigan by winning a total of 12 awards at this year's NAHP conference, including three gold awards, two silver awards and seven bronze awards.

In accepting the gold award for Outstanding Hispanic Success Story at the José Martí Primero Awards Gala Dinner, owner and publisher Eva Garza Dewaelsche acknowledged the strong foundation laid by founding publisher Dolores Sanchez. She continued, "It is an honor to be recognized by our peers in the Hispanic publishing community. We could not achieve this level of excellence without the talented and dedicated team of writers, photographers, editors and staff that support our work in the community week in and week out."

EL CENTRAL Hispanic News won 2025 José Martí Awards in the following categories:

GOLD AWARDS

Hispanic Success Story
Nora Chapa Mendoza Named 2024 Kresge Eminent Artist

News Event Photo Essay
Design-Build Green Hub Opening Fiesta, by Irma Maribel Andrade and photos by Alejandro Ugalde

Business Section
Changing Landscape of Southwest Detroit

SILVER AWARDS

Lifestyle Section
A Detroit Love Story: Event Planning in Southwest Detroit by Angela T. Perez Harris and photos by Erik Howard

Sports Section
NFL Draft 2024: Detroit's Biggest Party Photos by Adam J. Dewey and Michael Alberts

BRONZE AWARDS

Community Photo
Young fan holding DCFC scarf by Adam J. Dewey

Multiple Article Series
World's Cultures, by Mariana Ayon

Cultural Article
An Historic Look at the Early Years of Southwest Detroit Murals, by Ozzie Rivera

News Event Photo
Bridging the Gap, by Michael Alberts

Cultural Photo Essay
Cinco de Mayo, by Alejandro Ugalde, Luciana Vega, Bill Deuparo and Elena Herrada

Bilingual Language Weekly Newspaper
Hispanic Heritage Month issue, Sept 19, 2024

Immigration Article
I Wanted Something Better, by Martina Guzman and photos by Alejandro Ugalde

Mexicantown Main Street Rebranding Celebrates the Spirit of Southwest Detroit, Showcasing its Diversity, People and Culture

Campaign kicks off with an unveiling and family-friendly community fiesta on November 22

On Saturday, November 22, the Southwest Detroit Business Association (SDBA) will formally launch the Mexicantown Main Street rebranding campaign by unveiling nearly 200 vibrant streetlight banners featuring messaging and graphics that highlight the corridor's rich culture and growing business community. This bilingual campaign emphasizes the area's identity and celebrates its Mexican roots.

The rebranding is part of a comprehensive initiative by SDBA and the Mexicantown-Hubbard Communities Main Street program, aimed at strengthening, marketing, and promoting the business district while preserving its heritage. The campaign includes a new logo, a refreshed website, and a monthly e-newsletter to engage residents, visitors, and businesses.

To commemorate the launch, the SDBA is hosting ¡Viva Mexicantown! The Rebrand Fiesta from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 22, within Mexicantown Mainstreet located at 1747 23rd St. (next to the new Taqueria El Rey).

Community Celebration: ¡Viva Mexicantown! The Rebrand Fiesta

The rebrand kick off is a four-hour, family-friendly community fiesta featuring a special presentation from community, business, and city officials, followed by a lively lineup of entertainment featuring:

- Live music from mariachi and salsa groups
- Vibrant performances by Wayne State University's Ballet Folklórico
- Energetic DJ sets to keep the party going
- Delicious food trucks offering a variety of local favorites
- Exciting horse show and demonstrations
- Bounce houses and family games for all ages

The event is designed to bring together families, neighbors, local business owners and civic leaders to celebrate this exciting new chapter in Mexicantown's storied history.

"This campaign represents more than rebranding," said Brandi Watts, Vice President, Programs & Compliance, Southwest Detroit Business Association. "It is a cross-cultural initiative developed through collaboration with local businesses, residents, and stakeholders to celebrate the area's rich heritage, multicultural identity, and thriving entrepreneurial community."

Mexicantown Main Street encompasses more than 1.7 miles of commercial areas

along W. Vernor Hwy. and Bagley St. The rebrand was the result of a collaborative effort among local businesses, residents and community stakeholders to strengthen and celebrate the area's unique cultural and commercial identity.

The rebranding captures the heart and history of Mexicantown while embracing the neighborhood's ongoing growth and

evolution. Each element of the new identity was shaped through a community effort and is designed to celebrate the area's people, culture and entrepreneurial spirit. Together, these updates create a unified look and feel that strengthens visibility, builds pride and positively positions Mexicantown for the future.

"The heart of this rebrand project has always been our people. Every banner, every color, and every word reflects the passion of a community that continues to build its own future. Mexicantown's story is Detroit's story—resilient, diverse, proud, and full of promise." said José Maldonado, Director, Mexicantown Main Street.

Key elements include:

- **Logo & Visual Identity** — Inspired by local heritage and that embodies Mexicantown's color, tradition and pride.
- **Streetlight Banners** — Nearly 200 bilingual banners line Vernor Highway and Bagley Street, featuring welcoming messages such as Shop (Compra), Dine (Come), and Love (Ama). Additional banners highlight multigenerational businesses, neighborhood storefronts, and renderings of major landmarks including the Gordie Howe International Bridge, Michigan Central Station and Detroit City FC's new stadium.
- **Website & Business Portal** — The new www.mexicantownmainstreet.com serves both visitors and local businesses, offering a community events calendar and free business profiles.
- **Monthly e-Newsletter** — Distributed monthly with community news, restaurant menus, and business spotlights while celebrating the district's people and progress (https://www.mexicantownmainstreet.com/subscribe/)

"Mexicantown is one of the City's most vibrant business districts – and includes the only certified Main Street Community in the City! This brand relaunch highlights that and honors the rich beauty, diversity, and strength of our businesses and residents. I am grateful for the leadership of SDBA for their commitment to inclusive and celebratory business development," said Detroit City Council Member Gabriela Santiago-Romero.

The new logo and banners were designed by Eddi Gonzales, owner of Eye Breathe Design and a longtime Southwest Detroit resident. Drawing inspiration from Mexican folklore, architecture and natural elements, the design incorporates the sun, cacti, pyramid steps, arches, desert stones, and the heart of the community.

The Mexicantown Main Street program follows the State of Michigan and National Main Street models, structured around four guiding principles: organization, promotion, design, and economic vitality. Each area is led by local committees of business owners, residents, and volunteers who dedicate their time and expertise to advancing shared goals.

To learn more about Mexicantown Main Street and explore the new brand, visit www.mexicantownmainstreet.com.

Detroit Repertory Theatre

Audition Notice

Spit In Your Face
by Paul Heller and Alberto Lomnitz
Co-Directed by Maurizio Dominguez and Leah Smith

A hilarious look at modern politics and absurd theatre.

- **Show runs:** May 29, 2026 **to** June 28, 2026
- Audition dates: Monday, November 24, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.
  and Tuesday, November 25, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
- All auditions are In-Person.
- Auditioners must call the Theatre to schedule an audition appointment.
- The auditions will consist of reading sides from the script.

Roles available:

Liliana Tzintzún - (Early 20's) A theater arts major. Mexican American. Of indigenous origin.

Fernando Calderón - Renowned Mexican Theater artist. Light skinned and, if possible, bearded.

Tom Leary - (50's - 60's) Artistic director of the San Francisco People's Theatre. White.

Knowledge of the play is HIGHLY recommended. Paper scripts are available from the Detroit Repertory Theatre and may be borrowed overnight for a refundable deposit of $20.

To make an appointment or to request a paper script, call the Detroit Repertory Theatre at (313) 868-1347 during office hours, Tuesday through Friday, between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

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M

Vibrant. Resilient. Ours.
Vibrante. Resiliente. Nuestro.

Welcome to the new *Mexicantown Main Street*.
Bienvenidos a el nuevo *Mexicantown Main Street*.

Transition Tracker: Mayor-elect Mary Sheffield Names Leaders of Transition Team

By Malachi Barrett for Bridge Detroit – Reprinted with permission
This story was originally published by BridgeDetroit, a nonprofit and nonpartisan news organization.
Visit the newsroom online: bridgedetroit.com.

Mayor-elect Mary Sheffield has assembled prominent leaders in business, philanthropy, community organizing, public safety and other key sectors to craft her plan for the first 100 days in office.

Sheffield named the leaders of her transition team and kicked off the group's first meeting Thursday morning at its Marygrove Conservancy headquarters. The team is embarking on "the boldest, most rigorous and inclusive transition in Detroit's history," Sheffield said, incorporating feedback from residents in upcoming public surveys and forums.

"This is a high-caliber, passionate, knowledgeable and intentional group that is ready to work for the betterment of the city," Sheffield told reporters at a Thursday press conference.

Melvin Butch Hollowell, a former corporation counsel for outgoing Mayor Mike Duggan, was selected as co-chair of the Rise Higher Detroit Transition. Hollowell said he's led seven other transition processes for incoming mayors. This team will look to best practices in other cities.

Sheffield earned 77% of the vote in the Nov. 4 election, giving her a clear mandate from voters to implement her agenda, Hollowell said. Donna Givens Davidson, CEO of Eastside Community Network and a co-chair of the housing development and planning committee, said Detroit's first woman mayor is a trailblazer. Givens Davison said Sheffield's overwhelming victory shows the trust she's built as City Council president.

"It's time for our neighborhoods to rise, and I'm honored that community development organizations represented by people like me now have a seat at the table," Givens Davidson said.

Eighteen transition committees will collaborate with civic and community leaders to develop policy recommendations and identify priorities for the first 100 days. Sheffield said the committees were chosen to reflect key issues and are led by people who have expertise and connections to everyday Detroiters.

The group will meet multiple times per week until Dec. 31. The transition team will announce opportunities for public feedback in the coming weeks and policy plans will be unveiled in the new year.

A chief talent officer responsible for vetting candidates for cabinet positions and other key jobs in Sheffield's administration will be announced at a later date. Sheffield said 795 applications have been submitted for jobs in her administration so far, showing the level of excitement people have for Detroit's future.

"We want to keep some institutional knowledge while also (bringing) in some new bold and innovative people," Sheffield said when asked how many people in the current administration she would keep on staff. "We have a great combination of both, and we're going to make sure that we have a committee that is tasked with looking at national and local experts to ensure that they're executing the vision and the values that I have as mayor."

It took Hollowell roughly five minutes to name all of the committee chairs. Hollowell said no one has turned down an offer to work on the team. Teferi Brent, an activist and minister serving on the public safety committee, said it's an impressive roster.

"I've never seen this kind of coalition before, and this speaks to her level of understanding, the relationships she's built over the years and her magnificent body of work, which is unparalleled," Brent said. "Only madame Mayor Sheffield could have brought us all together."

Brent said the public safety and emergency services committee will focus on addressing the root causes of crime. Brent said the criminal justice system harms people to stop them from harming others. Their approach will focus on healing, Brent said.

"This is what we're about: Justice, safety and peace," Brent said. "We will not allow ourselves to live in the community where our elders are terrorized, where our babies are worried about being killed as they walk back and forth to school and where women are being assaulted at the gas station while trying to pump their gas."

Gary Torgow, chairman of Huntington Bank, is a co-chair of a committee focused on economic and workforce development. He said Sheffield laid out a clear vision for Detroit's next chapter in the "new Sheffield era."

"I have had the privilege of working alongside so many partners dedicated to Detroit's revival, from our neighborhoods to our business community and our civic institutions," Torgow said. "We've seen Detroit at its toughest moments and at its most inspiring. This moment today, this transition is clearly one of the most important and critical chapters yet … We are all confident standing in this room and throughout the city that her leadership will usher in a new era of growth that touches even more of Detroit's neighborhoods, Detroit's citizens and Detroit's community."

No public or campaign dollars are being used to fund the transition. Hollowell said members are volunteers and will not be paid. A fund was established at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, and supported by 15 foundations, to fund transition community engagement and talent acquisition efforts.

The Rise Higher Detroit Transition announced the following leaders of policy committees:

Finance Co-Chairs:
- Suzanne Shank, CEO and co-founder of Sibert Williams Shank & Co., LLC
- Dave Massaron, vice president of Infrastructure and Corporate Citizenship for General Motors

Neighborhood Revitalization Co-Chairs:
- Kenyetta Campbell, executive director of the Cody Rouge Community Action Alliance
- Anika Goss, president and CEO of Detroit Future City
- Eva Garza Dewaelsche, president and CEO of SER Metro-Detroit *
- Zeke Williams, founder of New Era Detroit

Workforce, Economic Development & Small Business Co-Chairs:
- Gary Torgow, chairman of Huntington National Bank
- Nicole Sherard-Freeman, president and CEO of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan
- Dwan Dandridge, CEO of Black Leaders Detroit

Education & Youth Affairs Co-Chairs:
- Angelique Power, president and CEO of The Skillman Foundation
- Ralph Bland, president and CEO of New Paradigm for Education
- Shawn Wilson, president of the Boys & Girls Club

Transit Improvement & Mobility Innovation Co-Chairs:
- Tiffany Gunter, general manager and CEO of SMART
- Megan Owens, executive director of Transportation Riders United
- Dessa Cosma, founder and executive director of Detroit Disability Power

Innovation & Emerging Industries Co-Chairs:
- Dug Song, co-founder of The Song Foundation and CEO of Duo Security
- Lisa Lunsford, co-founder and CEO of GS3 Global
- Johnnie Turnage, CEO and co-founder of Black Tech Saturdays

Health, Human Services, Homelessness & Poverty Solutions Co-Chairs:
- Denise Brooks-Williams, executive vice president and COO of Henry Ford Health
- Linda Little, president and CEO of Neighborhood Service Organization

Infrastructure, Sustainability & Climate Change Co-Chairs:
- Tony Reames, Tishman Professor of Environmental Justice, University of Michigan
- Nate Ford, associate vice president of HNTB
- Natalie King, president of Dunamis Clean Energy

Housing Development & Planning Co-Chairs:
- Donna Givens Davidson, president and CEO, Eastside Community Network
- Rob Lockett, executive director, LISC Detroit

Internal Administration & Operations Co-Chairs:
- Hakim Berry, executive consultant and former chief of staff to Mayor Mike Duggan
- Sharon Madison, owner of Madison Madison International

Ethics Compliance Co-Chairs:
- Elliott Hall, president, Elliott Hall PLLC and a former City of Detroit corporation counsel
- Ellen Ha, chief of staff, Wayne County Corporation Counsel and former Detroit Inspector General

Law & Civil Rights Co-Chairs:
- Cinnamon A. Plonka, managing partner at Zausmer, P.C.
- Rev. Dr. Wendell Anthony, president of the Detroit Branch NAACP
- Nabih Ayad, founder of the Arab-American Civil Rights League

Philanthropic Services Co-Chairs:
- Donald Rencher, president and CEO of Hudson Webber Foundation
- Laura Grannemann, executive director of the Gilbert Family Foundation

Arts, Culture & Entertainment:
- Shahida Mausi, CEO of the Aretha Franklin Amphitheater)
- Lane Coleman, chairman of the Detroit Institute of Arts
- John Collins, chairman of the Detroit Entertainment Commission and president of Detroit-Berlin Connection

Human Resources & Labor Relations CoChairs:
- Mikyia Aaron, secretary-treasurer of Laborers' International Union of North America Local 1191
- Brandice Mullen, vice president of SEIU Michigan

Tourism, Branding & Special Events:
- Arn Tellem, vice chairman of the Detroit Pistons
- Claude Molinari, president and CEO of Visit Detroit

Public Safety & Emergency Services:
- James E. White, CEO of the Detroit Wayne Integrated Network and former Detroit Police Chief
- Dawn Ison, former United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan
- Teferi Brent, activist and minister at Fellowship Chapel

Public Policy Co-Chairs:
- Angela Baldwin, partner at The Miller Law Firm
- Samuel "Buzz" Thomas, president and principal of Activate Detroit

Mayor-elect Mary Sheffield announces leaders of her transition team during a Nov. 13, 2025, press conference at Marygrove Conservancy. (BridgeDetroit photo by Malachi Barrett)

The team includes 11 people who donated a total of $26,285 to Sheffield's campaign. Campaign finance disclosures released two weeks before the election show she raised $2.7 million overall.

Tellem gave Sheffield's campaign a maximum donation of $8,325. His wife, Nancy, and son Eric Tellem each gave $8,325. Torgow did not personally donate to Sheffield's campaign, but family members gave a combined $25,000. Thomas gave $7,325 and Ayad gave $3,325. Plonka, managing partner of Zausmer PC, donated $1,200. Attorneys at Zausmer contributed a combined $4,650 to Sheffield's campaign.

King gave $2,500 and Little gave $1,000. Other donors serving on the transition team include Sherard-Freeman ($500), Brent ($250), Berry ($250), Dewaelsche ($250) and Rencher ($250).

Malachi Barrett is a mission-oriented reporter working to liberate information for Detroiters. Barrett previously worked at MLive newspapers in Muskegon, Kalamazoo, Lansing and Detroit. He was named Michigan's 2019 Newspaper Rising Star by the Associated Press. Barrett graduated from Central Michigan University in 2016.

Barrett lives in Pingree Park on the eastside with his wife. He grew up in Southwest Michigan but spent childhood years in California, Wisconsin, Virginia, South Carolina and Japan. His inbox is always open for news tips and pictures of Spider-Man. mbarrett@bridgedetroit.com

Editor's Note: Eva Garza Dewaelsche is also the owner and publisher of EL CENTRAL Hispanic News

Michigan Minds podcast:
Effects of Immigration Raids on Mental Health of Families and Students

By Juan Ochoa with William Lopez

ANN ARBOR—William Lopez, clinical assistant professor of health behavior and health equity at the University of Michigan, has dedicated years to studying the effects of immigration enforcement on communities throughout the United States.

Through his research, Lopez seeks to understand how immigration raids alter the daily lives and mental health of families, particularly among children and students. Large-scale raids, heightened fears of deportation and shifting federal policies have created environments of uncertainty and anxiety among Latine families.

Lopez joins Michigan Minds to discuss his findings on the effects of immigration raids, offering insight into how intensified enforcement efforts shape the well-being and resilience of students and their communities.

Can you share some thoughts on how this has affected K-12 and college students this year?

We often think about deportation as who is being deported and that is certainly important. But what is also critical to understand is there is this fear, this chilling effect about the possibility of deportation that can change behaviors in a community.

After immigration enforcement, students often stop going to school. In the week following enforcement, there are lots of absences. In my study of six worksite raids in 2018, schools continued to be impacted because parents were detained or deported and could not take their kids to school. Other parents were simply scared to drive and would not take their kids to school.

We saw a spike in absences after these raids. A colleague at Texas Tech found that more arrests can mean more absences among students, especially Latino students and lower test scores in language and math.

Deportation and the fear of deportation definitely impact attendance rates and test scores among K-12 students.

Are kids being pulled out of school completely?

That is one option. In the day after a large-scale enforcement, parents simply were not bringing their kids to school. This tends to be Latino students and these are the communities with which I worked. We are also seeing absentee and attendance discrepancies between Latino students and white students.

In the long term, sometimes students return to school, but we do see higher rates of students leaving the district. When students choose to leave and attend a different school, they tend to do well. But when students are forced to leave because of poverty, homelessness or deportation, they struggle to reintegrate.

At a minimum, in the days following enforcement, we see upticks in absences. Some students return; a smaller portion leaves the district. When students are worried about their families and their lives, they do worse in school and nothing can distract the child like the fear of parental deportation.

What are some lesser-known impacts on families and students who live with the fear of deportation?

This takes me back to one story I was told when I did my work here in Washtenaw County. One of the men detained in the raid told me his kids now refuse to sleep in their own room and wanted to sleep in his room. His son would say, "Well, dad, I am scared. When I am asleep, if I am holding your hand, no one will be able to take you away from me."

Parents, teachers and church leaders across the country share stories of children fearful they may never see their parents again. One impact of fear of deportation is children's attachment and relationship with parents and guardians, worrying they will not be able to see those people again.

Mass deportation affects families and also teachers, who have to explain that the parents who dropped them off may not be the parents to pick them up and have to make up for achievement gaps when Latino students do not attend school or see decreases in their grades.

If ordinary citizens with no prior experience or training in immigration procedures start working with law enforcement officers and arresting individuals, what issues or problems might arise during these arrests?

When you expand at this rate, any number of things can happen when the pieces are not in place to screen who you are hiring, for example. And we certainly see this in recent arrests in Chicago and in LA where these arrests are overtly violent.

They often involve firearms being carried unholstered with fingers on the trigger of the weapon. And they often involve lots of racial profiling, as was confirmed by Tom Homan, the former director of ICE during the first Trump administration and the current border czar under the current Trump administration. What I also want to be clear about is that from a public health perspective, deportation

William D Lopez, PhD, MPH. Photo courtesy of University of Michigan

is always something that should concern us.

What we know from our research is that separating people from their families and their communities will always be unhealthy. So before we get even into the critique of hiring more ICE agents, I want to go back to the very beginning and say, even if the hiring went "well" and everyone was screened correctly, deportation by the nature of what it is doing is bad for individuals, families and communities.

What are some of the ways parents and students can seek help?

Schools can always have a plan for what will happen when one or multiple parents are removed. Districts had to decide who would be allowed to pick up their students and prepare bus drivers so they did not drop students off in homes where there were no parents.

Legal resources always have been and will always be needed in these situations, both low-cost legal resources, but certainly bilingual or multilingual resources that are accessible. When someone is detained at a remote location, it is often hard for the lawyer or family members to drive to visit them, so we need to find lawyers who are bilingual and low-cost and community members willing to drive to these remote locations.

Are schools and communities helping to deal with issues related to deportation?

Absolutely. One thing that I have seen in this work is that communities do not just sit by. Families and communities have always found ways to support those when someone is removed. Many of these resistance strategies were creative, were beautiful, tapped into cultural and linguistic and even musical heritages and fought the deportation, the efforts to deport community members in creative ways.

We see mutual aid networks pop up throughout the country. Sometimes providing someone or finding a lawyer for someone is only one part of the strategy. Often, the family left behind needs to find some ways to continue on as we talked about, integrating back into schools, but also simple things like filling the refrigerator with food. Churches often had food drives immediately after these worksite raids and collected food so that community members could have something to eat.

Food and diapers were constantly needed after enforcement events and mutual aid networks popped up all over the country to be able to support these families.

Have you seen an increase in classmates being bullies to some of the Hispanic or other students?

Yes, it can impact how students and children feel about their Latino classmates. I have come across instances of bullying. It is not particularly what I study in my research, but those stories have shown up. This shapes how our country feels about Latinos and this shows up in adults when these ads from ICE and DHS use overt racial and prejudice messages, discriminatory messages. This changes how we relate to each other.

They used the ASMR trend . The first one was the sounds of deportation in the morning and they focused on the sounds of shackles clinking on the ground as detainees were walked into a plane to be deported. And then the second was the ASMR, the sounds of the Venezuelan ships being blown up. So you hear the machine gun fire and you hear the explosion of the ship.

Why is this important? Because the deportation of Latinos in this case and the extra judicial elimination of this boat in international waters was presented as a joke, as a meme and people were deported and people were killed in the latter example. And this changes how our nation thinks about Latinos, about immigrants and even things like international jurisdiction and law and war.

Closing thoughts?

I want people to realize that this is mass deportation on a scale that we have not seen in our lifetimes and that is historic in the history of the US. The raid that happened in Ellabell, Georgia, in which nearly 500 people were detained in a single site, is the biggest raid in history. So we are in a historic moment. And just as mass deportation has started, mass resistance has started as well. And we have to decide how we are going to interact in this particular moment that is notable in our country's history.

Michigan Minds is produced by Greta Guest and hosted by Michigan News staff. Jeremy Marble is the audio engineer and Hans Anderson provides social media animations. Listen to all episodes of the podcast.

Esta entrevista está disponible en español en https://elcentralmedia.com/

Juan Ochoa, Spanish Communication Representative for Michigan News, has diverse experience in media and communications across international and local organizations and is dedicated to connecting U-M with the Spanish-speaking world through news and research.

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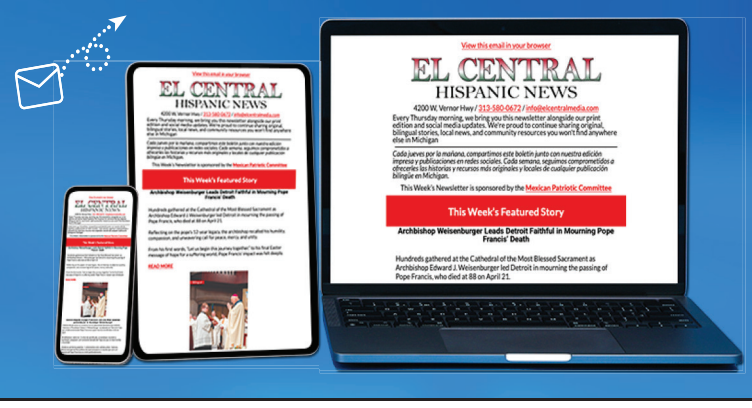
EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS



A Day in Space

Photos courtesy of United Way for Southeastern Michigan

As school buses from six local districts landed at the Michigan Science Center, 575 fourth graders celebrated with applause, cheers and high fives. United Way for Southeastern Michigan's annual STEMPossible Symposium – presented by Stellantis – is back after a year away.

"The last time I came here I was a baby, but this time I'll remember it forever," said Kevin, an 8-year-old student from Stevenson Elementary. "When I grow up, I want to be an astronaut or a scientist, because I love everything about space— even black holes, which are kind of creepy."

This year's STEMPossible "A Day in Space" theme was perfect for Kevin and his fellow explorers who experimented with rockets, virtual reality, circuits, building and programming. United Way's generous sponsors not only funded the event but also volunteered at interactive science stations.

United Way for Southeastern Michigan's president and CEO, Dr. Darienne Hudson, with a group of fourth grade students from one of United Way for Southeastern Michigan's community schools.

"The name of our booth is VRstronaut; the kids can explore the planets, read about them, rotate them and move them around," said Aditya Srivastava, vice president, Head of Sales and Business Development at STG. "When they see something like this, that they have not experienced before, you can hear it in their voice and you can see it in their eyes— I think that's totally worth it."

STEMPossible is organized by Tech United, a group of chief information officers and IT professionals dedicated to closing the digital divide and bringing STEM opportunities to local students. The following sponsors made this event possible: Stellantis, Comerica, Ally, Verizon, Deloitte, Little Caesars, Alfa, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, BorgWarner, DTE, Envorso, Ford, GM, Nutanix, PTC, Rimini Street, Slalom, STG and RouteOne.

"At Stellantis, we are dedicated to strengthening our communities and inspiring the next generation of innovators and engineers who will shape the future of mobility," said Eugene Nikolavsky, senior vice president, IT Global Sales and Marketing and Head of North America IT at Stellantis. "Our ongoing partnership with United Way on STEMPossible is a powerful way to invest in that future and help develop a diverse, talented pipeline for Michigan and beyond."

Opening Doors and Closing Divides

STEMPossible brings many students, like Carlito, to the Science Center for the first time. Standing in Leonardo Da Vinci's Machines in Motion exhibit, Carlito nodded enthusiastically when asked if the center was bigger than he expected.

"I loved the bubbles downstairs, and the tank over there," said Carlito, a 10-year-old from Ann Visger Elementary, pointing to Leonardi Da Vinci's fighting vehicle. "Math is my favorite subject because I like multiplication and division— I want to be a math teacher."

Although Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) are foundational for successful futures, 36% of Michigan families report that their children don't participate in any STEM learning. Households earning under $35,000 per year were most likely to indicate that their children do not participate in STEM opportunities.

Fourth-grade students from Stevenson Elementary School engaging in a live, interactive science show on the science stage.

"This is an awesome opportunity for students to see the Science Center for the first time, especially when their parents are working and cannot bring them," said Gail Sanders, a paraprofessional at Ann Visger Elementary. "I do see most of the science in the classroom is on the board and students are watching, so to come here, the hands-on experience is great."

Making Failure Fun

At DTE's station, students had a blast crafting circuits with copper tape, batteries and multicolored lights. Rich Geyer, IT manager at DTE, noted the fun that STEMPossible brings to STEM.

"The kids are loving it so far; the circuits seem like magic to them," said Rich Geyer, IT manager at DTE. "You hear about science and think, super boring, but you don't realize it's fun until you can really see that this is what we're talking about.

"The students can do it today and then make a career out of this."

Through scientific experimentation, students are learning that failure can be fun and is a necessary step on the path to success. At Ford's rocket launching station, students experimented with the difference fins had on their straw rocket trajectories.

"I would say, 'Don't be afraid of failure,'" said Soroor Soltani, PhD, director of Global Campus LAN Services at Ford. "We all get it wrong the first time and that's the beauty of it; science is not like other subjects that you learn by memorizing and then it's gone.

"When you get it wrong in an experiment, you learn and you never forget it."

Inspired to get STEM opportunities to local students? Learn more about Tech United at https://unitedway-sem.org/get-involved/give/affinity-groups/tech-united/, or consider supporting their mission at https://ignite.stratuslive.com/unitedway-sem/get-involved/donate/tech-united-donation-page.

De la oficina del Tesorero del Condado de Wayne,
Eric R. Sabree

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Ghosts Supper: Honoring those who died by the Anishinaabe people

Story and photos by Erick Diaz Veliz

Smoke from the sacred fire curled between the dry leaves as Mary Lee, 55, an Anishinaabe woman from the Little River Band of Odawa nation, placed trays of fry bread and wild rice soup to honor her ancestors at the Ghost Supper at the Fenner Nature Center in Lansing on November 6th, where dozens gathered.

The sacred fired and medicine: tobacco, cedar, sage, and sweetgrass.

"This is what our ancestors always ate, and this is how we remember them. I try to teach my granddaughters how to cook it," Lee said.

The Ghost Supper is a drop-in feast that celebrates those who are in the spirit world. Across the Great Lakes region, when autumn reaches its midpoint and the leaves begin to fall, the Anishinaabe nations, Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi honor their loved ones who no longer live among us by sharing dishes in communal suppers.

This celebration is taking place in the first 3 weeks of November at several locations across Michigan. At the Nokomis Learning Center, a museum of the Anishinaabe people located in Okemos, dozens of community members of all ages brought dishes and drinks to share and celebrate in memory of their ancestors on Sunday, November 2nd in the afternoon.

"Generous spirit, we are giving our hearts to this tobacco and prayer," began a prayer recited in Anishinaabemowin, the Anishinaabe language, to those present before the elders went to serve their dishes before the youngest ones; while outside, the sacred fire would be kept alive until the end of the meeting, as in every gathering.

Next to the sacred fire, which was set before the feast, was Ramona Henry, 41, an Anishinaabe woman from the Ojibwe nation and a member of the Saginaw Chippewa tribe. She took a handful of medicine: tobacco, cedar, sage, and sweetgrass from their containers before putting them into the fire along with a short prayer; then, she explained the purpose of the celebration.

"You're here honoring those who came before, but you're also making a dish they loved, something that represents them. That's a way of welcoming them," said Henry who is part of the organizers of the Ghost Supper in Lansing.

Community feast during Ghost Supper event at the Nokimis Center in Okemos, November 2nd.

Similar to the Day of the Dead concept by indigenous communities in Mesoamerica and South America, for the Odawa people, "the veil to our regular world and our spirit, is open," explained Henry.

"The creator gives us time with our loved ones," she added.

Although this tradition is from the Odawa nation, other Anishinaabe nations also practice it, sharing it among themselves from reservations to urban areas.

On various reservations in Michigan, during the first weeks of November, those who host ghost suppers leave their doors open as an invitation to community members and spirits, while in urban areas, community dinners are organized.

"We are all known as Anishinaabe, but we have different traditions. The Ghost Supper comes from the Odawa people. Even though I'm Anishinaabe, I honor it," said Henry. "We Ojibwe people offer spirit plates throughout the year. For example, my brother is no longer here, so anytime I think of him, I'll make his favorite food and then leave it in the woods or into the fire."

Todd Parker, an attendee at the Nokomis Center, said food is all what is about and it is a way of recognizing the spirit of the creator.

"Among all the gifts you can give, food is the number one because food sustains life," Parker said while more attendees with full plates in their hands approached his table to sit next to him.

Parker highlighted the importance of maintaining the tradition of these events for the native community living in urban areas far from the reserves. "A lot of people have a hard time doing the supper on their own. Students 2,000 miles from home or older people who sometimes live alone have to do it this way. So, we all share here as a community," he said.

Sculpture representing the Anishinaabe people on display at the Nokomis Center in Okemos.

Many return to this celebration to share and listen to stories, where elders share knowledge with younger people, especially those who want to learn more about their own culture.

Emily Sorroche, 43, director of the Office of Culture, Access, and Belonging at MSU, says that in this way, the youngest learn the values and traditions because they will represent these events in the future. However, there are some challenges among native college students.

Mary Lee, 55,Anishinaabe woman from Little River band of Odawa nation and her grandaughter.

"They may not have heard about things like this for whatever reason," Sorroche said. "Maybe they get too much email, or didn't read about the event on time, or maybe they aren't connected to the people who know about these things. So that's a challenge we often come across.

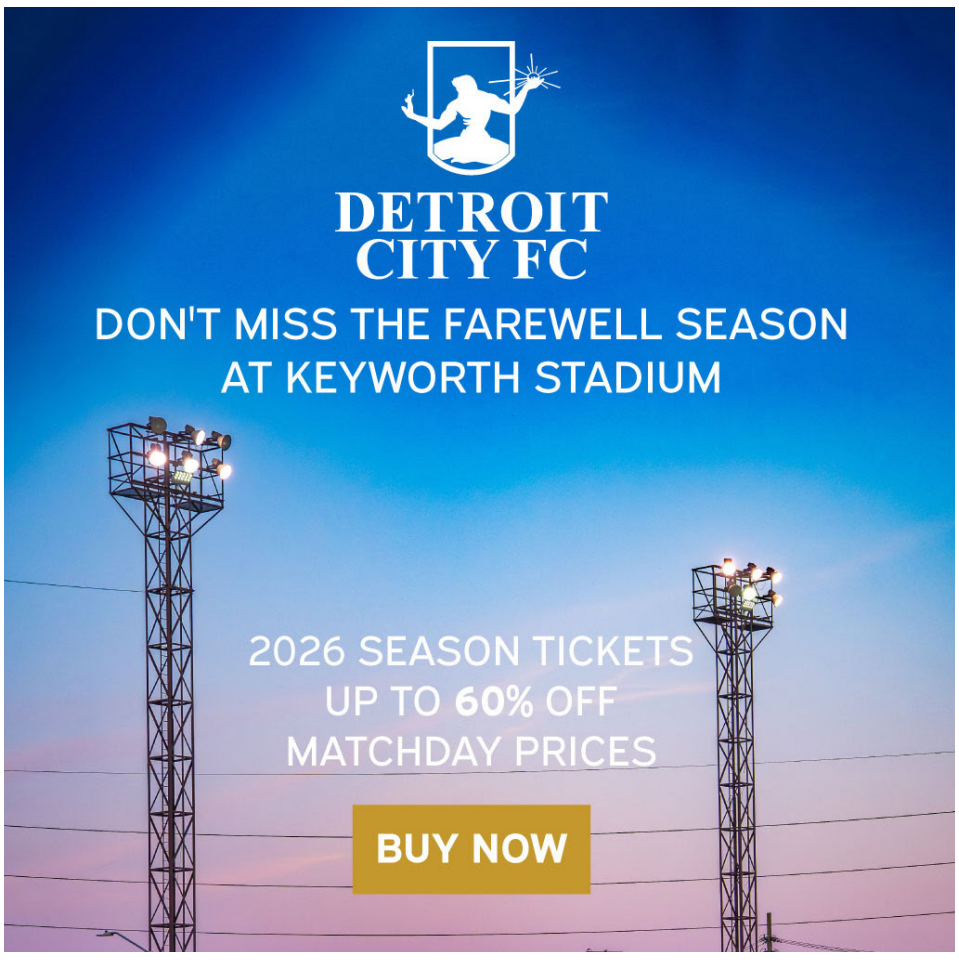
"There is a lot of stereotype and discrimination. And because a lot of the native people don't live in their tribal communities, it's hard to keep those traditions going when you aren't surrounded with it," added Henry.

Despite the challenges, both Sorroche and Henry agree on the importance of closing the cultural gap for native youth who wish to maintain and learn about the culture they have inherited. Events like the Ghost Supper in the city are part of that effort.

Attendees pray in Anishinaabemowin, the Anishinaabe language, in thanksgiving before the feast begins.

Erick Diaz Veliz is a Peruvian reporter based in Lansing, Michigan. He has documents and reports on cultural, social, and political issues in Peru and Michigan as a freelancer. Erick was born in Lima, Peru, and has been living in Lansing since 2018.

This article and photos were made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.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Part 2: Why Every Detroit Rapper Wants Diego Cruz Behind the Camera

The second installment of a three-part profile of Detroit filmmaker Diego Cruz and the work that made his name impossible to ignore

By Michael D. Gutierrez

Cruz shot about 20 music videos in 2015, the year he connected with Icewear Vezzo.

Vezzo was grinding independently then, still unsigned to Motown, still funding his own music. But he carried legitimate street credibility and a relentless work ethic that resonated across Detroit's hip-hop scene.

"I did that first video for free," Cruz recalls. "I was like, 'Yeah, hell yeah, let's do it.' We shot it, turned it around quick—boom. The rest is history."

The first video, "Camera Off," came out in September 2015. Shortly thereafter, Vezzo wanted another one. Cruz quoted him a price that, in hindsight, makes him wince. He won't say what he charged. Cruz says, "I was trying to figure out, like, what do people even charge for videos at this level? And I thought, 'This isn't bad—it's a day's worth of [construction] work.' So I just did it."

Over the next year, Vezzo and Cruz became close collaborators. In February 2016, they dropped "Rain," co-directed with Nick Margetic, one of Detroit's established directors. The video would eventually climb to 1.5 million views. When Vezzo's team started planning the video for "Moon Walken" in spring 2016, they initially wanted Cruz to work with Margetic again, but Cruz pushed back. Cruz wanted more than shared credit—he wanted to direct it himself. Not because of any beef with Margetic – there was nothing but respect between the two – but because Cruz needed to prove he could do it alone.

When "Moon Walken" dropped in April 2016, Cruz recalls, "That video was huge for me. It showed people I could do this on my own. It was a breakout hit for [Vezzo] and I."

While, comparatively, the video would only go on to rack up over 300,000 views – small numbers for Vezzo nowadays – Cruz had stepped out from under anyone else's shadow. Now, he wasn't just a credit share, but a name.

"Angel Wings" came in February 2017 and blew past a million views. It was clear that at this point, Cruz and Vezzo had developed a rhythm: fast turnarounds, street authenticity, and that polished look that made independent artists seem like they already had label backing. Things were going well for Cruz, and the frequent collaborator he had in Vezzo was making a name for himself on a national level.

Then, in 2017, Vezzo went to prison.

It had gone down back in fall 2015—a Detroit gas station, Vezzo passing off a Glock. With a prior on his record, touching a firearm was a violation. The conviction came in 2017. Vezzo would spend 20 months behind bars. Just like that, one of Cruz's most consistent collaborators would be gone for nearly two years.

But while Vezzo was locked up, people started asking Cruz to shoot with them

"There were artists who thought I was only shooting for Vezzo," Cruz recalls. "Like, they didn't want to reach out because they assumed it was exclusive—which wasn't true. They'd say, 'We didn't know, we didn't want to disrespect him.' And I'd tell them, 'All you had to do was ask.'"

One by one, artists who'd been holding back started reaching out, and Cruz kept shooting, building a reputation that was his alone.

He writes in the dim light with one earbud in, holding on to the dream that feels like his. This quiet image anchors the emotional core of the video.

An older teen stops him in his tracks and introduces him to a world of fast money and fast consequences. Cruz frames this moment in Tee Grizzley's "We Dreamin'" music video, like the turning point in a coming-of-age tragedy.

Fresh Out

Vezzo had limited time out of his halfway house in 2018. That's when he called Cruz to pull up.

"I was like, 'Bet. Of course,'" Cruz says. "So he gets to the studio, makes the song, and while he's recording it, I'm filming everything—right there as it's happening."

According to Cruz, Vezzo had around an hour outside of the halfway house. A few hours after Vezzo returned to the house, Cruz had already edited the video and dropped it on YouTube.

"I think it's at almost 3 million views now, but at the time it hit a million fast," Cruz recalls of the Drank God Back Freestyle. "It was his first track out, and it just took off. And right after that, he got signed."

In the fall of 2018, Vezzo signed with Motown Records, joining a roster that included Lil Baby, Migos, and City Girls, artists who were heavyweights in the trap and street music space that was dominating hip-hop. For Cruz, it validated something he'd been betting on: that Detroit artists could compete at the highest level, and that the videos he was making could help get them there.

"That became my reputation," Cruz says. "Artists were used to waiting weeks for their videos. I was cutting that down to maybe a few days, sometimes a week."

It's true that the mix of the visuals, the lyrics, and the public's yearning for Vezzo's music after nearly two years of silence had all contributed to the freestyle's viral success. And while the music video's visuals themselves are flashy and the editing is frenetic and highly stylized, the visuals weren't representative of what Cruz would eventually become known for in the Detroit music video community.

His real breakthrough came later in 2018 with one of Detroit's biggest breakout stars, an artist whose 2017 track "First Day Out" had exploded like a gunshot and racked up millions of views in days, forcing the industry to pay attention to what was happening in Detroit for the first time since Dej Loaf broke into the scene. He'd opened doors that had been locked for years and proved Detroit rappers could go national, could go platinum, could compete with anyone. When an artist at that level works with a new director, it sends a signal through the entire scene. That artist was Tee Grizzley.

The Narrative Turn

The "We Dreamin'" video follows a Black teenage boy hunched over a notebook, crafting lyrics while his overworked mother struggles to put breakfast on the table. Desperation pulls him toward

The boy sprints through an alley as sirens close in, his backpack slipping from his hand. His flight is driven by fear, adrenaline, and a decision that cannot be undone.

fast money, and though his friend pushes back, it's already too late. An introduction gets made to a house full of hard men, and then the flashing lights come: a raid, bodies scattering, his friend hitting the pavement while the boy keeps running. Cruz even added subtitles so you could follow every word of unspoken dialogue, and eventually you can't tell whether you're watching a music video or a short film that happens to have a soundtrack.

"People in the comments were like, 'Yo, this touched me,' or, 'This hit different, emotionally,'" Cruz remembers. "And that's when people started to notice my style… In this city, it's always like, 'Who's the most popular artist right now? Okay, who shot their video?' That's the person everyone wants."

"Detroit artists, once they find a videographer they like, they usually stick with them," Cruz explains. "So when Tee started shooting with me, that was a big deal. It was the first time he worked with someone new."

With both Tee and Vezzo on his reel – two of Detroit's biggest names – Cruz felt like he had arrived. Alongside CT Films, Jerry, and the MVP crew of Margetic and Kiefer, he was easily one of the top directors working in Detroit.

Going Full-Time

By winter 2018, the math had become undeniable. Cruz's video work had grown so consistent (and lucrative) that staying in construction made no sense.

"You gotta think, I was physically breaking my body working 40 hours a week," recounts Cruz. "Then I started charging more for my videos and realized I could make that same money in a day or two."

Cruz was getting booked so often that during the winter, when most construction workers file for unemployment as projects slow down, he forgot to file at all. When he finally went to file and realized what he'd missed, the choice crystallized. He wasn't going back to construction.

"I was doing video full-time. And I told myself, 'Even if I just do one video a week, I'll be good.' Because I was charging what I used to make in a week." But Cruz wasn't doing just one a week. He was doing two, sometimes three. The bookings kept coming, and he began to build something he finally had a true calling for.

A young protagonist steps out into the morning cold with his headphones in, already carrying the weight of his world. This moment sets the emotional tone of the song.

That had been the mission from the beginning. Cruz would study videos from the coasts, dissecting lighting, framing, production value. He'd ask himself: "What are they doing that we're not?" But it wasn't just technical polish Cruz was chasing. It was the storytelling. It was the emotional depth he'd absorbed back in those days at MJR Southgate, watching how his favorite films invested audiences in characters beyond their Hollywood spectacle. Braggadocious raps needed more than just flex, they needed context, consequence, and humanity. Cruz was meshing the flashy visuals with the grounded narrative choices that belonged in feature films.

Cruz was merging the two—slick visuals and grounded storytelling; music video style meets narrative cinema.

By late 2018, he'd made his point. He wasn't just Vezzo's director anymore. He'd become one of Detroit's top visual storytellers, someone who could make shoestring budgets look limitless and understood that great music videos, like great lyrics, told stories. It was the story that made any song remarkable.

Then in October 2019, his mentor Gerard Victor told him he'd maxed out in Detroit. Bigger opportunities existed elsewhere, and that "elsewhere" existed in New York City. Cruz was skeptical—but he left the city anyway, not knowing that walking away would be the only way to understand what he'd be walking back to.

– Part 3 next week –

He scribbles lyrics at the kitchen table while his mother rushes past, tired and stretched thin. Cruz captures a home where love and struggle exist side by side.

A police raid explodes into chaos and his friend hits the pavement. It is one of the video's rawest scenes and it blurs the line between music video and street-level drama.

Michael D. Gutierrez is the Digital Content Manager for EL CENTRAL Hispanic News. He is a screenwriter and filmmaker with a decade of experience in the television and film industry, contributing to projects including THE HOLDOVERS and LETHAL WEAPON on Fox. He is an active member of the Writers Guild of America-West and its Latino Writers Committee.

This article and photos were made possible thanks to a generous grant to EL CENTRAL Hispanic News by Press Forward, the national movement to strengthen communities by reinvigorating local news. Learn more at www.pressforward.news.

Wolverines - 85 Wake Forest - 84

EL CENTRAL
HISPANIC NEWS
SPORTS

Sports Editor: Dan Graschuck/ EL CENTRAL

Photos by Adam J. Dewey

On Tuesday, November 11th, the University of Michigan Wolverines (3-0) defeated Wake Forest Demon Deacons (2-1), 85 - 84, in overtime, for the Wolverine-Deacon Challenge.

The Wolverines fell to the Demon Deacons 72 - 70, last November, during the challenge.

The Wolverines go on the road Monday, November 24th, to take on San Diego St. Aztecs, at 10:30 pm (truTV), then travel to take on Auburn Tigers, on Tuesday, November 25th, at 8:30 pm (TNT), before returning back home, to host Rutgers Scarlet Knights, on Saturday, December 6th at 4:00 pm (Big Ten Network)

Photos below are highlights from the Wolverines vs. Wake Forest game

Wake Forest F #25 Tre"Von Spillers blocks a shot by Wolverines F #21 Morez Johnson Jr.

Wolverines C #15 Aday Mara dunks the ball on two of Wake Forest's defenders G #2 Juke Harris and F #13 Cooper Schwieger

Wolverines head coach Dusty May talks to Wolverines 7'3" C #15 Aday Mara (from Zaragoza, Spain)

Wolverines G #3 Elliot Cadeau steals the ball from Wake Forest and calls for a time-out

Wolverines G #11 Roddy Gayle Jr. drives the ball along the baseline with Wake Forest F #13 Cooper Schwieger guarding

Wolverines F #21 Morez Johnson Jr. knocks the ball out of Wake Forest's F #11 Marqus Marion's hands whith Wolverines C #15 Aday Mara guarding

American Revival Moves Forward

EL CENTRAL HISPANIC NEWS
Pateando la No. 5
SPORTS

David Levine
EL CENTRAL

It wasn't that long ago people questioned the US men's national team's pride, unity, and dedication. Players weren't seen to be giving the effort required in the national colors. They were booed off the field in Nashville at the beginning of June and looked like a gutless collection of wannabe big names. Argentine manager Mauricio Pochettino had to start sending some important and tough messages to get his ideas across.

Since the start of the fall internationals, Pochettino's message has begun to sink in. A number of players who thought their places in next summer's World Cup have found themselves watching from afar as a few unheralded names have seized their opportunities. Two of them started games for the USA in Qatar three years ago. Goalkeeper Matt Turner and midfielder Yunus Musah haven't been involved this fall. Their places have been lost largely due to their performances or lack of performances at the club level.

Turner finished the 2022 World Cup as the unquestioned #1 goalkeeper. He played well enough in Qatar and with the New England Revolution to earn a move to Arsenal. He couldn't claim the starting job there and moved to Nottingham Forest, then on loan to Crystal Palace, and now supposedly with Olympic Lyon in France. OL loaned him back to the Revolution, but the club failed to make the MLS playoffs. For the 31 year old, there doesn't seem to be a path back to the national team. Matt Freese of New York City FC has started the last 11 games and shows no signs of giving up the job.

Musah saw his role at AC Milan reduced to that of spectator. The club gave him a loan to Atalanta where he once again has a great view of the Serie A from the bench of a good team. His play has yet to take any steps forward from the promise he showed coming up in the Arsenal Academy and with the USA in 2022. Several players have surpassed him. Tanner Tessman and Christian Roldan started in the center of midfield last weekend. They aren't even the first choice pair. Pochettino picked others to support the engine room, but not Musah. Barring injuries and a radical resumption of his upward trajectory, Musah will be a spectator next summer, as well.

Pochettino went so far as to drop Weston McKennie from the midfield mix, even though he has been playing well for Juventus. The Italian club just brought in a new manager, so the thinking is that McKennie will need to win over Luciano Spalletti the same way he has convinced all the previous managers since his move to Italy. But with the World Cup just a few months away, leaving a previously key player like McKennie out made a lot of observers wonder if there is something else happening.

But, what of the players Pochettino did include for the final international window of 2025? Now that he has changed the team shape from a back four to a back three with two wingbacks, Pochettino has refined his selections. Injuries played a part in his choices as they usually do. The likes of Christian Pulisic, Antonee Robinson, Alejandro Zendejas, Tim Weah, and Chris Richards sat out the November camp. Robinson's absence has become a major worry since his knee problem surfaced in the spring.

Those injuries have given opportunities to others. The players who did make the camp made a solid impression in the 2-1 win over Paraguay. The visitors played an aggressive, chippy, and occasionally dirty style against the USA. A few months ago, that would have been a problem for the US team. However, Pochettino has passed on his familiarity with South America's rough and tumble style to his team. They gave as good as they got in the physical play. That includes the bench-clearing rumble at the end of the game when Alex Freeman and Paraguay's Diego Gomez tussled over a throw-in. Sebastien Berhalter led the American charge into the fray. While saying the right things publicly, Pochettino must have been smiling at the spirit and unity his team showed.

Physicality aside, the US played some decent football against a team that has the second fewest goals conceded in the South American World Cup qualifiers. The Americans opened the scoring with a header from Gio Reyna in the fourth minute. Reyna joined the team largely due to the long injury list. He has played less than 150 minutes for Borussia Moechengladbach in the Bundesliga. Pochettino let him have 75 minutes for the national team. Reyna has said he wants to be a part of the World Cup team. He showed that against Paraguay. His passing and movement were excellent. He battled for the ball and looked every bit a team player. This was the first headed goal of his career and it looked like he had been scoring that way for years.

Pochettino will have to work with his defense to clean up the kind of errors that resulted in Paraguay's equalizer just five minutes after Reyna scored. Miles Robinson and Tim Ream failed to mark Alex Arce in front of the goal, while Joe Scally got caught up the field as Paraguay countered. With no cover from midfield, the USA saw their lead vanish almost as quickly as it had come.

Undeterred, the Americans controlled much of the game. Tessman and Roldan battled hard in the middle of midfield with help from Brendan Aaronson. Once they won the ball, they looked to release left wingback Max Arfsten and right wingback Sergino Dest. Arfsten supplied the cross for Reyna's early goal when Paraguay failed to clear a corner. Like Dest on the right, Arfsten is comfortable using both feet. It makes them versatile enough to switch sides or cut inside from either wing, a valuable variation for the attack.

Folarin Balogun started as the center forward. The position looks like his now. He didn't get many chances during his 75 minutes, but he scored on the one that came his way. Substitute Diego Luna, a Pochettino favorite, combined with Roldan to force a turnover in the Paraguay half. Balogun pounced and played Reyna down the left and then cut to the middle. Reyna's cross hit a defender and fell right in Balogun's path. He made no mistake, restoring the USA's lead.

The challenger to Balogun's position is Ricardo Pepi. The Texas native has missed a lot of time this year with a knee injury and now fills a super-sub role for PSV Eindhoven. He has scored plenty of goals coming off the bench, but can't seem to hold the starting job. He came in for Balogun last weekend and had a golden chance to increase the USA's lead, but his first touch failed and he wanted too many more touches to prepare the ball for a shot, losing his chance. Given the few opportunities international strikers have to score, seeing Balogun convert while Pepi missed will make an impression on Pochettino when he prepares to fill out his lineup for the June 12 World Cup opener.

Having beaten Paraguay in Philadelphia, the USA moves on to Tampa to face an even tougher, more physical South American opponent in Uruguay. Pochettino will certainly make a few changes to look at the rest of the roster, but he will also expect the same intensity, unity, and spirit he saw against Paraguay. The USA now has a three match unbeaten run against teams that have qualified for the World Cup. They have started to look more like the team Pochettino envisioned when he took the job in 2024.

Lions Hosting New York Giants, Sunday, Nov. 23rd

Photos by Adam J. Dewey

The Detroit Lions lost to the Philadelphia Eagles, this past Sunday, 16 - 9. The Detroit Lions are looking to bounce back, as the get ready for a 3 game home stand at Ford Field, starting by hosting the New York Giants, this Sunday, November 23rd at 1:00 (FOX), then take on the Green Bay Packers, on Thanksgiving Thursday, Thursday, November 27th at 1:00 pm (FOX), then the Dallas Cowboys, for Thursday Night Football, Thursday, December 4th at 8:15 pm (PRIME VIDEO). Photos are from previous Lions home games

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EDITORIAL OPINION

Guest Opinion:

Trump's Truly Sh*tty Economy
And 10 things Democrats should pledge to do about it when they're back in power

By Robert Reich

Trump claimed last week on social media that "Our economy is BOOMING, and Costs are coming way down," and that "grocery prices are way down.

Rubbish.

How do I know he's lying? Official government statistics haven't been issued during the shutdown — presumably to Trump's relief (the White House said Wednesday that the October jobs and Consumer Price Index reports may never come out).

But we can get good estimates of where the economy is now, based on where the economy was heading before the shutdown and recent reports by private data firms.

First, I want to tell you what we know about Trump's truly sh*tty economy. Then I'll suggest 10 things that Democrats should pledge to do about it.

1. Prices continue to rise as real wages fall

While the cost of living isn't going up as fast as it did in 2022, consumer prices are still up 27 percent since the onset of the pandemic. Wages haven't kept up.

Americans know this. In a recent Harris poll, 62 percent say the cost of everyday items has climbed over the last month, and nearly half say the increases have been difficult to afford.

Much of this is due to Trump's tariffs, which are import taxes — paid by American corporations that are now passing many of the costs on to consumers. Even Trump knows this, which is why he's removing tariffs on coffee, bananas, beef, and other agricultural commodities. But his other tariffs will remain, boosting the costs of everything else.

As a result, wages — when adjusted for inflation — have been falling, government and private-sector data show. Since the start of the year, inflation has been rising faster than after-tax pay for lower- and middle-income households, according to the Bank of America Institute.

According to the JPMorganChase Institute, the rate of real income growth has slowed to levels last seen in the early 2010s, when the economy was still recovering from the financial crisis and the unemployment rate was roughly double what it is today.

2. Job growth has stalled

Americans are scared of losing their jobs. In the same recent Harris poll I referred to above, 55 percent of employed workers say they're worried they'll be laid off.

That worry is borne out in the data. Indeed's job posting index has fallen to its lowest level since February 2021.

The Fed's Beige Book — which compiles reports from Fed branches all over the country — also shows the job market losing steam.

The latest ADP private-sector data confirms that the labor market continued to weaken in the latter half of October, with more than 11,000 jobs lost per week on average.

Finally, Challenger, Gray & Christmas (a private firm that collects data on workplace reductions) reports that U.S. employers have announced 1.1 million layoffs so far in 2025.

That's the most layoffs since 2020, when the pandemic slammed the economy, and rivals job cuts during the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009.

3. Homeowners are underwater, and foreclosures are up

Nearly 900,000 homeowners (about 1.6 percent of all mortgage holders) are now underwater on their mortgages, the highest share in three years. Many of these buyers purchased in 2022–24 with low down payments in markets that have since cooled.

At the same time, filings for home foreclosures are up about 17 percent since the third quarter last year (according to ATTOM Data Solutions), suggesting more borrowers in trouble.

4. Corporate profits continue to rise

You might think that with all these stresses on American consumers, corporate profits would dip. But in reality, U.S. corporate profits continue to rise, and the stock market continues to hit new highs (although the stock market is wobbly, as I'll get to in a moment).

As a result, the investor class — the richest 10 percent of Americans, who own over 90 percent of the stock market — are reaping big rewards.

How to square this with all the layoffs and so few job openings? Amazon's profits are through the roof, but it's laying off 30,000 people.

First, corporations are reluctant to expand and hire because of so much uncertainty about the future, caused in large part by Trump's tariffs and his expulsion from the U.S. of many workers critical to the agriculture and construction industries.

Secondly, profits are being led by the six major high tech firms, whose monopolistic hold over their markets has given them the power to raise prices.

Third, many corporations are making use of artificial intelligence. AI is boosting business productivity while reducing the demand for workers. We're seeing that trend mostly in the technology sector, which continues to substitute AI for jobs. But the trend seems to be spreading to other industries.

5. Inequality is widening

Put this all together and you get a two-tier economy whose inequality gap is widening.

America has always had a two-tiered economy, but for the last 80 years, the middle class has been in the upper tier along with the wealthy, while the working class and poor have been in the lower one.

Now, the middle class is joining the lower tier. This new reality has huge implications both for the economy and for American politics.

The richest 10 percent of households — whom I've described as the investor class — now account for nearly half of total U.S. spending, thanks to the stock market surge. (Thirty years ago they were responsible for about a third.)

Meanwhile, middle- and lower-income families are pulling back. They're facing tightening budgets, higher living costs, declining real wages, and a raft of corporate layoffs.

The consequent divergence in spending — with a smaller group of people keeping the economy going — is fueling concerns that the U.S. economy is becoming more fragile.

With the economy so dependent on the richest 10 percent — who in turn are highly dependent on the stock market — a stock market downturn would raise risk of a serious recession.

6. What the Democrats must pledge to America

The Trump economy is truly sh*tty for most Americans. Every time Trump or his lapdogs in Congress tell Americans that the economy is terrific, they seem more out of touch with reality.

Democrats need to show America that they can be better trusted to bring prices down and real wages up.

This means, in my view, promising the following 10 things. These should constitute the Democrats' pledge to America:

1. Trump's across-the-board tariffs are import taxes that are raising the prices of just about everything American consumers buy. Democrats will eliminate them where their costs to consumers are far higher than any potential benefits in the form of new jobs.

2. Another major source of high prices is monopolies — especially in high tech, health care, food, and finance. Democrats will vigorously enforce antitrust (anti-monopoly) laws. Giant corporations will be busted up. Mergers or acquisitions by large firms, barred.

3. Workers need more bargaining power to get higher wages. Part of the answer is stronger unions. Democrats will make it easier for them to start or join unions.

4. The national minimum wage will be raised to $20 an hour. No one who works full-time should be in poverty.

5. Housing cost increases will be slowed by stopping private equity firms from buying up large tracts of housing and colluding on prices.

6. Health care costs will be lowered by making Medicare available to everyone.

7. Working families will get help with childcare and elder care.

8. They'll also get paid family leave.

9. If adequate-paying jobs are unavailable, workers will also have access to a universal basic income. It won't make families comfortable, but it will be enough to keep them out of poverty.

10. Taxes will be raised on the wealthiest to pay for this.

What do you think?

Opinions in this column are not necessarily those of the Publisher or Editor

Do you have a contrary opinion? Write us at info@elcentralmedia.com

SPECIAL WORLD'S CULTURES

Manila Galleon

Manila Galleon

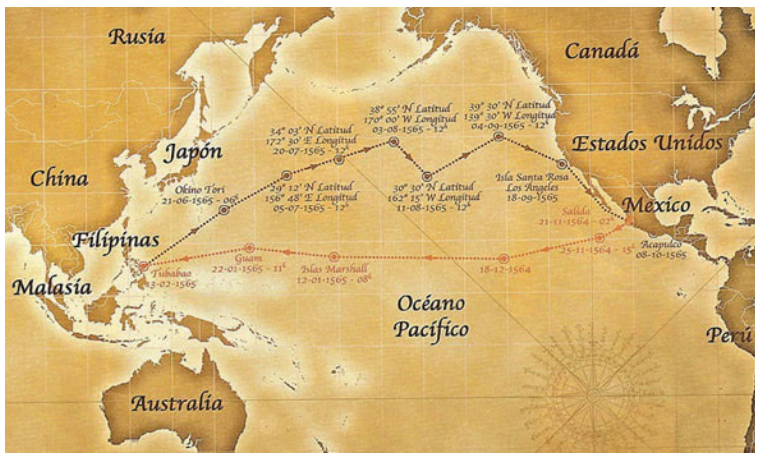
The Manila Galleon was the name given to the trade route that traveled from the Americas to Asia, crossing the entire Pacific Ocean. This route was also known as the Manila Galleon or the Acapulco Galleon; the galleon's name changed depending on its destination. The main route was Manila-Acapulco-Manila, as the Philippines, the most important Asian point, and the Pacific coast of New Spain (present-day Mexico) could be accessed from various ports, including Acapulco (Guerrero), San Blas (Nayarit), Cabo San Lucas (Baja California Sur), and Barra de Navidad (Jalisco).

The route was inaugurated in 1565 by the Spanish sailor and friar Andrés de Urdaneta, after discovering the return route to New Spain across the Pacific Ocean, thanks to the Kuroshio Current, which flows eastward toward the Americas. The route was navigated and maintained for 260 years, until the last ship sailed from Manila to Acapulco in 1815.

The Manila Galleon was a route navigated by different ships and vessels from different countries, especially Spain and Portugal; however, Dutch and English ships also sailed it, often led by privateers and pirates who would capture Spanish ships. This is why Spain did not reveal the point of departure, only Manila as a reference point.

Thus, 16th-century navigators were distinguished by their curiosity and desire to explore seas and territories.

The Manila Galleon had a significant commercial impact, as it transported the goods



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needed by the colonizers and conquerors, mainly silver and other minerals, as well as other goods such as textiles and spices.

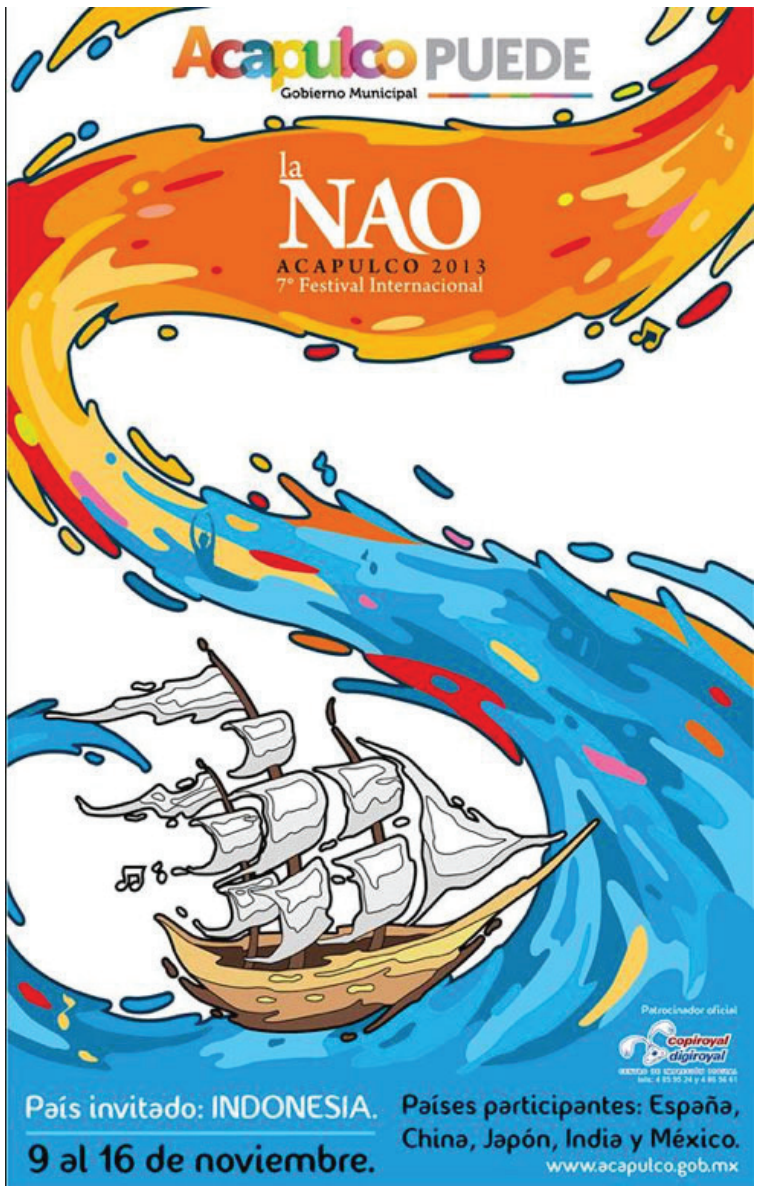
However, it also had a unique impact in terms of social exchange, cultural influence, and other forms of exchange. Thus, to this day we see Asian

influence on the Mexican Pacific coast, just as we see Mexican influence in Manila.

The Manila Galleon was so important that even though it closed its route at the beginning of the 19th century, in the 20th century the duo Bandeño used it as a reference to narrate the tragic events of 1986 in the port of Acapulco, Guerrero.

Likewise, the Manila Galleon is a symbol of Acapulco's identity, which has driven the development of the Manila Galleon Cultural Festival. This festival has served to expand and update the iconographic and critical record of the cultural and artistic expressions of the entire state of Guerrero. The festival, which took place last week, is held annually between the second and third weeks of November.

Even this same year, 2025, the experimental documentary "I watched the drops fall illuminated by lightning, and every time I breathed I sighed, and every time I thought, I thought of you" premiered, in which contemporary lives can be observed while they are interspersed with dialogues that refer to the letters sent to the family of one or more crew members of the ships that crossed the Pacific in the Manila Galleon, Acapulco Galleon.



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EL CENTRAL Hispanic News
ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO,
by Mariana Ayón RV

ESPECIAL CULTURAS DEL MUNDO

La Nao de China

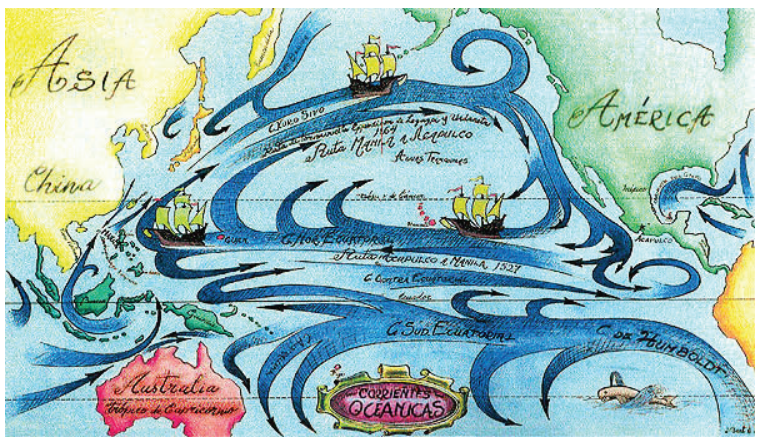
La Nao de China

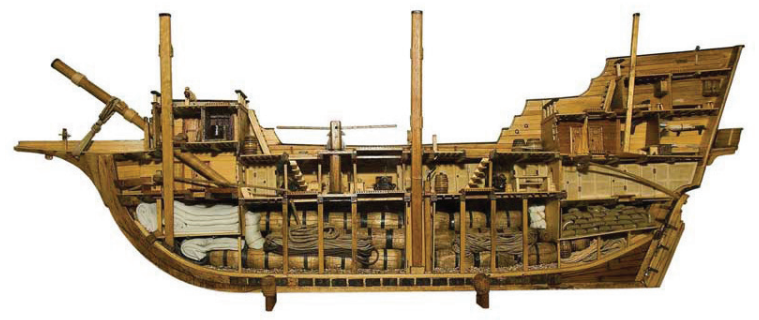
La Nao de China es como se le llamó a la ruta comercial que iba desde el continente americano hasta el continente asiático cruzando todo el Océano Pacífico. A esta ruta también se le conoció como Galeón Manila o Galeón Acapulco, el nombre del Galeón cambiaba dependiendo de la ciudad que tenía como destino, cabe destacar, la ruta principal era Manila-Acapulco-Manila, pues, las Filipinas el punto asiático más importante y las costas del Pacífico de la Nueva España, actual México, podían variar entre el puerto de Acapulco (Guerrero), San Blás (Nayarit), Cabo San Lucas (Baja California Sur), Barra de Navidad (Jalisco), principalmente.

La ruta fue inaugurada en 1565 por el marinero y fraile español Andrés de Urdaneta, tras descubrir el tornaviaje o ruta de regreso a Nueva España a través del océano Pacífico, gracias a la corriente de Kuroshio de dirección este hacia América. La ruta fue navegada y se mantuvo por 260 años, hasta que en 1815 zarpó el último barco desde Manila rumbo a Acapulco.

La Nao de China era una ruta navegada por diferentes barcos y naves, así como diferentes países, sobre todo España y Portugal; no obstante, también barcos Neerlandeses e Ingleses, quienes generalmente eran también liderados por corsarios y piratas que secuestraban las naves españolas, razón que hizo que España no revelara cuál era el punto de partida, sino sólo Manila como punto de referencia.

Así, los navegantes del siglo XVI se distinguían





por su curiosidad y gusto por explorar mares y territorios.

La Nao de China tenía gran impacto comercial, pues movía las mercancías necesarias para los colonizadores y conquistadores, principalmente plata y otros minerales, así como otras mercancías como telas y especias.

Sin embargo, tuvo un impacto propio de los intercambios sociales, el impacto cultural, la influencia. Así, a la fecha vemos la influencia asiática en las costas del Pacífico mexicano, como la influencia mexicana en Manila.

La Nao de China tuvo tanta importancia que aunque cerró la ruta a principios del siglo XIX, en el siglo XX el dueto Bandeño utilizó la referencia para narrar los acontecimientos trágicos de 1986 en el puerto de Acapulco en Guerrero.

Asimismo, La Nao de China es un referente de la identidad acapulqueña, lo que ha impulsado el desarrollo del festival cultural La Nao de China, que ha servido para ampliar y actualizar el registro iconográfico y crítico de las expresiones tanto culturales como artísticas de todo el estado de Guerrero. Festival que tuvo su realización la semana pasada y que se realiza año con año entre la segunda y tercera semana de noviembre.

Incluso este mismo 2025 se estrenó el documental experimental ***Miraba caer las gotas iluminadas por los relámpagos, y cada que respiraba suspiraba, y cada vez que pensaba, pensaba en ti,*** en el que se pueden observar las vidas contemporáneas mientras se intercalan con diálogos que remiten a las cartas enviadas a la familia de uno o varios tripulantes de las embarcaciones que cruzaban el Pacífico en el Galeón Manila, Galeón Acapulco.

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